

**SOLANO COUNTY LIBRARY
THREE YEAR LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY PLAN
2001-2004**

LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

Solano County Library offers professional, innovative, cost-effective service by providing library materials, resources, information, entertainment and life-long learning opportunities to enrich the lives of the people of Solano County. Current goals as they appear in the Library's FY 2000/2001-FY 2003/2004 strategic plan are:

- All people served by the Solano County Library will be able to get answers to their questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school, and personal life.
- Adults and young adults in Solano County will have ready access to information in a variety of formats to satisfy their demand for information about popular culture and trends and their desire for enjoyable recreational experiences.
- Children in Solano County will have ready access to information in a variety of formats to encourage them to explore popular culture and social trends and to help them have satisfying recreational experiences.
- Young people 12-18 years old, living in Solano County will have the skills required to evaluate the accuracy and usefulness of data in all formats so that they can find the information they need to make effective decisions.
- Senior citizens in Solano County will have the skills required to find, evaluate, and use electronic information resources effectively.
- Adults living in Solano County will be literate and possess the reading and writing skills they need to meet work and personal needs.
- People in Solano County for whom English is a second language (ESL) will become sufficiently proficient speaking English to meet their work and personal needs.
- Preschool children in Solano County will develop a love of reading and learning and enter school with the skills needed to succeed.
- Senior citizens in Solano County will have access to programs and materials on a wide variety of topics to address their need for ongoing life-long educational opportunities and their desire for personal growth.
- All people served by the Solano County Library will have a safe and inviting place to meet and interact with others, to satisfy their personal/social needs, to discuss issues of interest to county residents or groups within the county and to work together on projects of mutual interest.

CURRENT TECHNOLOGY OVERVIEW

The Library provides access to an online catalog and numerous online databases. Among the topics covered by the databases are general interest periodicals, readers advisory, genealogy, literature, business, health, government, and social issues.

The Library is a member of the Solano, Napa, and Partners (SNAP) Library Consortium. The six jurisdictions within SNAP share the local automated system provided by TLC/CARL Corporation, as well as the online databases. There are four public libraries and two community college libraries in the SNAP consortium.

All of the six members access the SNAP catalog and databases through a frame relay network. Three Solano branches and three partner branches access the SNAP network through dedicated T1 lines; the remaining branches throughout SNAP access the SNAP system via 128K frame relay lines.

The Library provides public access to the Internet via a T1 frame relay connection to Cable & Wireless (formerly Exodus), an internet service provider located in Santa Clara. The gateway to the ISP is supported locally on a Sun Sparc20 server. The T1 feed is located at Solano County Library Headquarters in Fairfield. Access is distributed out to the SNAP branches via the Library's WAN, which is shared with the five SNAP partner jurisdictions. All libraries offer graphical browser access.

Telephone services provide access for the public to library services and for communication among staff using telephones, fax machines, and personal computers equipped with modems.

The Library catalogs its collection on OCLC via dedicated access. Bibliographic records are transferred electronically from OCLC to the SNAP catalog nightly.

The Library participates in the North Bay Cooperative SuperSearch resource sharing project. This is a patron-initiated ILL system among libraries in the NBC region. SuperSearch uses standard web browsers and a Z39.50 interface to simultaneously search the PACs of multiple NBC member libraries. Item availability status is used to enable users to place holds on selected titles.

TECHNOLOGY PLAN

During the past year, the Library completed a 20-year Facilities Master Plan and a 3-year Strategic Plan. Technology planning for the Library is based on those two documents, as well as on the plans for the SNAP partner jurisdictions.

There are currently 293 PCs deployed among the Library's six branches. A PC replacement program is in place, in which funding is included in the annual budget to replace one-quarter to one-third of the PCs as they become obsolete. Through grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the InFoPeople Project, the Library has equipped a Computer Center at the John F. Kennedy Library in Vallejo. In addition to being open to the public during the branch's open hours, staff and public training sessions are conducted there regularly.

Within the next three years, the Library plans to build at least one new facility and remodel two existing facilities. These facilities will be planned around the concept of employing technology to its greatest advantage to enhance public services. Each facility will be planned with enough space to accommodate the Facilities Master Plan recommendation of 1.3 computers per 1000 people in its service area. Computer centers will be built into each facility and will have a minimum of 10 PCs. These centers will be used for public and staff training and will be open to the public during all hours that the facilities are open.

The meeting rooms in these new facilities will be equipped with presentation capabilities, including a laptop computer, projection equipment, and a sound system. Library staff is continuing to explore changes to the way business is done in order to enhance service to patrons. For example, each existing, new, and remodeled facility is being equipped with self-charge machines and self-service reserves pick-up shelves in order to expedite circulation services to patrons.

Other library functions that will be enhanced to provide patron self-service include PC scheduling, print management, and online registration for library cards and programs. Plans are underway to create a telephone reference center, which will enhance services both to call-in and walk-in patrons, who will no longer have to wait as service desk staff balance questions. At some point within the next three years, the Library plans to augment its telephone reference service with participation in the Golden Gateway Library Network's Q&A Café, a collaborative web-based online reference service. Improvements to the Library's automated telephone attendant system will be implemented to provide callers with clearer instructions and more self-service options. Within the next 12 months, the Library plans to implement email notification to customers for reserves, overdues, and fines.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

The Library has 96 analog telephone lines to support public access and intra-library communication. As new facilities are added, additional phone lines sufficient to provide the current level of support will be added. The deployment of remote phones and headsets for staff is being explored to give the staff the flexibility of spending more time out on the floor where customers are using the Library's resources.

The Library's wide area network consists of three 128K frame relay lines and three T1 lines into Library Headquarters. Another T1 line connects Library Headquarters to the Internet service provider. The Library also hosts six 128K frame relay links and one T1 link to our partner libraries. As plans progress on building and remodeling facilities, Library staff will assess the existing network with an eye toward expanding it appropriately. Staff will work with network consultants to determine additional bandwidth needs and will meet them as necessary. At this writing, it is expected that all new facilities will be equipped with T1 lines and that an additional T1 line will be installed between the central site network server and the Library Internet service provider. Upgrading current facilities to point-to-point T1 or DSL lines will be explored in order to accommodate increased traffic on the frame relay network from Internet traffic and the ILS. Emerging telecommunications technologies will be researched as they are identified.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE PRODUCTS

10BaseT Category 5 plenum cabling and some fiber optic cabling is installed at most of the Library's existing facilities. Category 5E cabling will be installed in all new and remodeled facilities. Fiber optic cabling will also be used where indicated. Experience dictates that regardless of the number of data drops installed in a facility, it is never enough; therefore, future building plans will incorporate a greater ratio of drops to square footage than are in existing facilities. The possibility of installing small wireless networks in some of the facilities will be explored.

There are currently 15 routers, 13 CSU/DSUs, 27 managed hubs, and assorted protocol translators, media converters, modems, and ethernet switches deployed throughout the SNAP network. As new buildings are added to the network, it is anticipated that, at a minimum, one router, one CSU/DSU, and one managed hub will be installed at each facility. Where necessary other equipment may be deployed based on the advice of the Library's network consultant. Unmanaged hubs will be used as necessary to link clusters of PCs to the network.

There are two Unix servers to administer the network. The Library plans to install several new servers within the next three years. Among other things, these will be used to manage the PC scheduling software, a proposed NT/Windows 2000 network, a firewall, and email customer notification.

The Library's ILS is run on a Tandem Himalaya K2000 mainframe. It is anticipated that this will be replaced within the next three years with an Compaq S7000 series model or equivalent. This will provide increased disk space memory and processing speed to better support the client/server environment of the ILS.

NETWORK CONNECTIONS AND INTERNET SERVICES

There are currently eight LANs throughout the Library's six branches. Six of the LANs connect the branches to the ILS and the Internet through a WAN. The remaining two LANs connects Library Headquarters to the ILS and to the Solano County WAN. As new facilities are built, LANs will be incorporated into them. Each of the SNAP partner facilities also operate LANs, which are maintained by partner staff, rather than Solano.

Internet service is currently supplied by Cable & Wireless (formerly Exodus) on a twelve-month annually renewable contract. For the foreseeable future, service supplied by Cable & Wireless will be adequate. As mentioned above, another T1 may be run from the Library to Cable & Wireless to handle increased traffic out to the Internet.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Pursuant to the Library's strategic plan, core competencies are being developed for various classifications of staff. Among these competencies is a technology component. Additionally, we have been assessing the comfort level of staff with technology. The results of this assessment help direct future staff training needs.

Most staff is trained in basic PC troubleshooting to resolve common problems and to know when it is necessary to call the technical support staff. All users of email are trained on MS Outlook. Information Desk staff is trained on the ILS and basic Internet uses. Select staff is trained in Microsoft Office and other productivity software through the County MIS department. The Library routinely takes advantage of courses offered through the InFoPeople project on a variety of technology-related subjects.

The Automation staff has received operations training through the Library's ILS vendor and also through Compaq/Tandem. The Administrative Librarian and Information Systems Coordinator attend the annual vendor users group meeting, which includes presentations from the vendor and from users and training on new products.

One Information Technology Specialist has been trained on Solaris 2.X system administration and at least one other staff member will be. The Information Systems Coordinator is currently taking coursework toward an NT certification. Several of the Information Technology Specialists are or have been taking programming classes through the local community college and one Information Technology Specialist MCSE-certified. Library Administration is committed to providing staff with appropriate training as decisions are made to employ new technologies.

Training and documentation are provided by a number of staff members, some of whom are borrowed as necessary from other Divisions.

SUPPORT

The Library Automation Division is currently staffed as follows:

- One Administrative Librarian, who oversees the Division and the direction the Library takes with technology.
- One Information Technology Coordinator who, oversees system administration and the day-to-day operations of the support staff.
- Four Information Technology Specialist IIs (recently reclassified from Computer Operator), who provide hardware, software, and network support to the Library staff and throughout the SNAP Consortium.

The Library contracts with the County Information Services Division for PC maintenance. The Library contracts with its ILS vendor for software and hardware maintenance and for network design and support.

The Library is currently conducting an organizational study with the assistance of a consultant. The possibility of creating a branch-level computer services liaison position is being explored as part of this study. It is envisioned that this position would be the first line troubleshooter of equipment and software at the branch and would be responsible for contacting support staff once local troubleshooting options have been exhausted.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The Library Director and the Administrative Librarian for Technology/Technical Services meet with the directors of the SNAP partner libraries monthly to set policy and direction for the shared system. During the annual budget process, the SNAP Directors establish goals for the shared system for the coming twelve-month period.

The Library's administrative team establishes library specific goals for other areas of technology during the budget process as well. Subsequent to this, the Library's technology plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary to assure conformance with the goals. Throughout the year, as new technologies or products emerge, they are evaluated to determine their potential effectiveness in moving the Library and the SNAP Consortium toward their goals.